recommendations of the Dewan Peishkars, and there was no guarantee that the best men from the community would be proposed for nomination. The Eazhava Members were thus coming to the Assembly annually by a sort of special selection, which depended upon the good-will of the local officers and of the Government. In his view, it was necessary to place the representation of the Eazhavas on a more stable and constitutional basis, and, for that purpose, he requested that a special electorate should be created for the Eazhavas for electing Members to the Assembly annually. He thought that, in view of the present unequal competition which could not be denied, the other communities would not, in fairness, grudge the concession asked for by the Eazhavas.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

140. The evils to which the Malayala Brahmins in general were subjected on account of certain practices in vogue among them and suggestions for remedying them.

Mr. Devan Krishnaru (Member, Jenmi, Quilon Division) said that there were at present certain religious authorities common to the Malayala Brahmins, the Nayars and a few other communities. They were said to belong to six families with separate local jurisdiction. Formerly, the members of those families were well-versed in Sanskrit, the Sastras, the Vedas and other religious literature and were in every way competent to advise the members of any of the communities that sought their advice as to any *acharas*, and they also impartially prescribed the necessary observances, penalties and the like, according to the circumstances of each case. But it was regrettable that the above families had now fallen from their high standard, on account of lack of education and other causes. They nevertheless arrogated to themselves the powers of their forefathers and dictated the rites, penalties, &c., according to their whims and caprices and in blissful ignorance of what was ordained by the Sastras. It was no wonder if, under such circumstances, they pronounced conflicting decisions. Even between the several members of the same family, there was often divided opinion. It was therefore the more so between the authorities in the different families. He regretted to say that their decisions could easily be purchased for a small consideration. The hardships and evils to which the communities, whose religious authorities they were, suffered under such a state of affairs, were better imagined than described. The Government were also not unaware of the potentiality for evil of some of the authorities and the wrong way in which they used their so-called power. The recent Ulsavom troubles in the Chengannur Temple were the result of such a wrong use of power, and there was no limit to the number of suits, civil and criminal, which it had caused and was still causing. He said that it was very necessary that the Government should step in and protect the communities affected against the possibilities for evil caused by the vagaries of the few, who constituted themselves the accredited religious authorities of the communities. He suggested that the initiative and the ultimate disposal should not vest in the authorities. If, in any matter they thought that action in a particular way was needed, the religious authority concerned should move the matter to the local Tahsildar, who should then start an enquiry, obtain the opinion of the religious authority wherever necessary, and then pass a decision. As in other matters, an appeal might be provided from the decisions of the Tahsildar to the Division Peishkar, and finally to the Government. He prayed that some action on the lines indicated might be taken as early as possible.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

141. Certain suggestions to improve the Public Service.

Mr. M. K. Govinda Pillai, B. A., B. L. (Member, Trivandrum taluk) said that his first point was the entertainment of foreigners in the Public Service in preference to the sons of the soil. The headships of departments, such as the Police, Engineering, Medical and Educational, should be thrown open to natives, as in Mysore and Baroda. It was gratifying that the Government recently made a wholesome departure, though temporarily, from the long-followed *mamool*, in filling up the vacancy of the Commissioner of Police during his absence on leave. The re-

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